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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/562,051	07/30/2007	Matthieu Helft	1022702-000151	6187

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EXAMINER

LISTVOYB, GREGORY

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1796

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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10/03/2008

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/562,051	Applicant(s) HELT ET AL.	
	Examiner GREGORY LISTVOYB	Art Unit 1796	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 July 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 19-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 19-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/23/2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 19-21, 23-25, 27-34, 35-40, 42 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bentley et al (US 4102846) herein Bentley.

Bentley discloses a process for preparing spherical polyamide particles having a mean diameter of less than 1 mm (Abstract, 1 um, see Example 1), comprising the following steps:

a) preparing a dispersion of a first liquid which comprises polyamide monomers, such as lactam (see Example 1), Nylon 6,6 salt (the same as one in the Application examined, both monomeric systems meet limitations of claim 23), in a high boiling hydrocarbon (the boiling point exceeds 150C, meeting the limitations of Claim 24, see Examples);

b) polymerizing the monomers by polycondensation by heating the reaction medium and maintaining the heating at a temperature below the melting point of the

Art Unit: 1796

polyamide with the desired degree of polymerization (see Examples) for 35 min, while distilling out forming water in azeotrope (see Examples) at atmospheric pressure (meeting the limitations of claim 27).

e) recovering the spherical polyamide particles therefrom (see Column 11, line 45).

Note that limitations c) and d) of claim 19 are optional.

Regarding claims 28 -30, Bentley teaches temperature of step b) above 150C, i.e. 170-183C (see Example 1), where azeotrope of the solvent and unreacted monomers are removed over period of 35 min (see Example 1).

In reference to claim 42, Bentley's system does not contain any emulsifying agent (see Example 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1796

Claims 19-21, 23-25, 27-34, 35-40 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohara et al (US 6127513) herein Ohara.

Ohara discloses a process containing the steps (a) and (b) of claim 1 (see Example 1). In addition, Ohara's process includes washing and drying procedure (see Example 1).

Ohara teaches the second solvent (xylene), which added after the polymerization (see Example 1). However, Ohara does not teach that the second solvent is added before the polymerisation starts.

The position is taken that the above solvent can be added before the polymerization in Ohara's process, since it assists in better dispersion of polyamide monomers, which facilitates the polymerization rate.

Therefore, it would have been obvious that xylene solvent can be added before the polymerization , since it assists in better dispersion of polyamide monomers, which facilitates the polymerization rate.

Claim 22, 32-34 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley in view of Okazaki et al (US 3446782) herein Okazaki.

Art Unit: 1796

Bentley disclose a process for preparing spherical polyamide particles having a mean diameter of less than 1 mm :

a) preparing a dispersion of a first liquid which comprises polyamide monomers, such as caprolactam, adipic acid and hexamethylenediamine in a second inert liquid

b) polymerizing the monomers by polycondensation by heating the reaction medium and maintaining the heating at a temperature below the melting point of the polyamide with the desired degree of polymerization.

e) recovering the spherical polyamide particles therefrom.

Bentley does not disclose the first liquid comprising a solution of monomers in water.

Okazaki discloses a process of manufacture of powdery synthetic linear polyamides, where dispersion media for monomers is water (see Example 1).Okazaki teaches that use of aqueous solution minimize a polymer degradation, decreases a cost of solvents (Column 4, line 20).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skills in the art to use water in Bentley's process, since it creates an azeotrope, which facilitates solvent removal.

Art Unit: 1796

Regarding claims 32-34, Okazaki discloses washing and drying process for his polyamide particles (see Example 6)

Claims 19- 22, 25- 27, 31, 35-41,43 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Montasser (WO01/68235, cited with equivalent US 2003/0059473) herein Montasser.

Montasser discloses a process for preparing spherical polyamide particles having a mean diameter of less than 1 um, comprising the following steps:

a) preparing a dispersion of a 10-90% of the first liquid (organic, see lines 0023 and 0041, Example 1) which comprises polyamide monomer, in a second inert liquid (aqueous, See line 0042);

b) polymerizing the monomers by polycondensation and/or polyaddition by heating the reaction medium and maintaining the heating at a temperature below the melting point of the polyamide with the desired degree of polymerization (see Abstract).

Regarding newly added claims 41 and 43, montasser teaches water and oil, which are immiscible solvents and form continuous and dispersed phases.

Montasser discloses that solvents can be removed by distillation

Montasser does not teach that both polyamide monomers dispersed in the first liquid. Instead he teaches that the second monomer is dispersed in the second liquid (see Abstract). He teaches that his process takes place at 5 fold excess of the second

Art Unit: 1796

monomer (see line 0011), which clearly constitutes a disadvantage of the above process. In addition, this process is applicable only for diamines soluble in water.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skills in the art to place both monomers into organic phase in order to decrease excess of a diamine and increase applicability of the process.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 7/14/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding Bentley, Applicant argues that claimed invention claims "first liquid which comprises polyamide monomers".

However, Bentley teaches monomers in the first liquid (see Example 1, where monomer is 11-aminoundecanoic acid).

Secondly, applicant argues that Bentley does not teach polymerization step.

This is incorrect. Example 1 teaches polymerisation of the above monomer in the media, comprising dispersant solution. In Example 2 a Hydrocarbon is added to a

Art Unit: 1796

dispersant solution in order to form dispersion media (in this case monomer represents by Nylon6,6 salt, which is adipic acid and hexamethylenediamine).

Regarding Ohara, Applicant argues that the reference teaches polymerization “under heating at a temperature higher than the melting points of the monomers...By contrast, claim 19 clearly requires that polymerization take place at a temperature which is lower than the melting point of the polyamide monomers.”

This is incorrect. Claim 19 teaches heating at a temperature higher than the melting points of the polyamide, but not monomers. Typically, melting point of a polymer is much higher than melting point of a monomer.

Regarding Ohara, Applicant argues that the reference does not use a second liquid for dispersion formation.

This is incorrect. Ohara teaches the second solvent (xylene), which added after the polymerization (see Example 1). However, Ohara does not teach that the second solvent is added before the polymerisation stars.

The position is taken that the above solvent can be added before the polymerisation, since it assists in better dispersion of polyamide monomers, which facilitates the polymerization rate.

Applicant does not present any arguments in reference to Okazaki.

In reference to Montasser Applicant argues that the reference teaches two miscible solvents.

Examiner disagrees. It does not contradict Claim 19, since miscibility of the solvents is not claimed. The second liquid of Montasser is non-solvent for the monomer, which creates a dispersion (see line 0011).

Applicant argues that Montasser does not teach inert solvents.

Examiner disagrees. Montasser's solvents do not react with the monomers (see Example 1, where a polyamide forms and oil and water form two-phase dispersion media).

Examiner agrees that Landoll teaches dispersion of a polymer. Therefore Landoll reference is withdrawn.

Rejection under 35 USC 112(2) is withdrawn due to amendment of claim 33.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 1796

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to GREGORY LISTVOYB whose telephone number is (571)272-6105. The examiner can normally be reached on 10am-7pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on 571-272-1119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1796

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Rabon Sergent/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1796

GL